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FROM THE CMD'S DESK

AJAY SINGH
Chairman and Managing Director

DEAR READERS,

Welcome aboard SpiceJet!
On the occasion of India's 77th Independence Day, I extend my sincere greetings to you. This day is a reminder of the sacrifices that were made so that we could live in a free and independent country. Let us join together in saluting the martyrs who laid down their lives for our freedom and continue to work towards building a better future for all Indians.

At SpiceJet, our journey of 18 years has been defined by a steadfast commitment to our vision of making air travel affordable and accessible for all Indians, while bridging the gap and connecting unexplored regions of our vast country. Our passion for enhancing the travel experience and our unwavering dedication to our passengers have been the driving force behind our success.

To fortify and propel our airline towards even greater heights, I have decided to infuse an additional Rs 500 crores into the company. This investment will serve as a catalyst for accelerating our growth plans, enabling us to seize new market opportunities, and bolstering our efforts to attain sustainable profitability.

With this infusion of capital, the airline is poised to forge ahead with an unwavering commitment to provide world-class services to our customers. We will utilise these funds prudently to strengthen our fleet, enhance our operations, and further improve the efficiency of our services.

In-line with our commitment to strengthen our capacity and network for seamless air travel, we added new routes and strengthened existing ones in the month of July 2023. We have added daily exclusive flights connecting Guwahati with Patna and Varanasi and Patna with Amritsar to our domestic network. We have also launched new flights connecting Chennai with Kochi and North Goa (Mopa) besides adding frequencies on Chennai-Madurai route. These flights will enable hassle free connectivity and provide a major fillip to travel and tourism in these destinations. In the month of August and September, we will also be starting international flights between Madurai and Colombo and domestic connection between Hyderabad with Varanasi starting 20th August 2023 and September 1, 2023 respectively.

In June 2023, our airline once again achieved a remarkable feat by attaining the highest passenger load factor of 93.6% among all the scheduled domestic airlines. This achievement reflects our commitment to delivering exceptional services and meeting the needs of our valued customers. With the unwavering support of our loyal customers and the dedication of our team, we look forward to achieving even greater milestones in the future.

As we embark on this exciting phase of growth, we express our gratitude to our loyal customers, dedicated employees, and stakeholders who have been the pillars of our success thus far. Together, we soar to new horizons, bringing dreams within reach and making air travel an integral part of every Indian's life.

Congratulations Team India on winning the 9th SAFF Championship title! Great determination and teamwork shown in the penalty shootout victory against Kuwait.

Kudos to Lakshya Sen for his remarkable feat at Canada Open 2023. His tenacity and determination led to a stunning victory over the reigning All England winner, securing the Canada Open Super 500 Badminton title.

Jai Hind!

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Remembering the role of handloom industry in India's freedom struggle, celebrate the spirit of Independence in the August issue of *Spice Route*

spice route

Volume 16 | Issue 169 | August 2023

PUBLISHER
Maxposure Media Group
CEO and Managing Director **Prakash Johari**

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#TheAddress, Plot No. 62, Okhla Industrial Area,
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EXPLORING THE FOUR BOUNDARIES OF LIFE: UNDERSTANDING AND NAVIGATING LIFE'S LIMITS

Life, in all its complexity and wonder, is governed by certain boundaries and limitations that shape our experiences and existence. They often provide structure and define our limits. For some, it may feel super restrictive, but for many, they offer guidance and a sense of order.

"There are four fundamental boundaries of life, and it is essential to explore and understand them for personal growth, fulfilment, and a deeper appreciation of our human existence", says Dr Manimekalai Mohan, the founder of SSVM Group of Institutions, Coimbatore. In a riveting Q & A, the eminent educationalist discusses each aspect at length.

What exactly is a physical boundary, and why is it essential for us to understand the capabilities and limitations of the human body from a young age?

The human body has specific capabilities and limitations. We all have distinct strengths, endurance, and overall health. We are bound by the laws of nature, unable to defy gravity or alter the basic principles of the physical world.

Recognising and respecting our physical boundaries is crucial for our well-being. It involves caring for our bodies through proper nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate rest. By teaching ourselves about physical limitations, we can maintain a healthy balance, optimise our performance, and lead a more vibrant life.

Emotional well-being is the buzzword, but few recognise its role in leading a happy life. Please shed some light on this.

Emotional boundaries often encompass our feelings, values, and personal boundaries in relationships. We must teach our children that emotional boundaries help us establish a sense of self and protect our physical and mental well-being. Maintaining healthy emotional boundaries involves recognising and respecting our feelings and needs while also respecting the feelings and needs of others. By addressing the emotional needs, one can foster healthy connections, protect themselves from psychological harm, and cultivate authentic and meaningful relationships.

We are in a highly competitive world. Children often get bogged down by comparisons. How can a child understand that they are brilliant in their own way?

There is endless information and knowledge available in the world, and we can only grasp a fraction of it. Recognising our intellectual boundaries requires humility and an open-mindedness to learning and growth. We should get children to acknowledge that we do not have all the answers and that there is always more to discover and explore. By embracing intellectual curiosity, seeking knowledge, and engaging in continuous learning, we can expand our academic boundaries and better understand ourselves and the world.

There are many faiths around us, and we can follow our beliefs. How should one learn to respect the spiritual boundary of another person?

Spiritual boundaries vary significantly among individuals and can be shaped by religious, philosophical, or personal beliefs. Exploring and understanding our spiritual limitations involves introspection, self-reflection, and a quest for deeper meaning. It invites us to explore our values, engage in practices that nurture our spiritual well-being, and find alignment between our inner selves and the larger world. Teach your child to respect others' faith, cultivate a sense of purpose, and find solace in times of uncertainty.

Dr. Manimekalai Mohan
Founder & Managing Trustee
SSVM Institutions,
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Buzz On Social Media

@flyspicejet Our son Adi had his first-ever flight journey from Durgapur to Chennai on July 12, 2023. It was an incredible experience filled with curiosity, delicious food and memorable moments. We are grateful to SpiceJet for making this journey possible.

@ArnabGh15807393

Thank you @flyspicejet SG2967 @aaitezairport @AAI_Official #Tezpur #Assam to #Kolkata #udaan #cabincrew Rani for all the help.

@MJyethi

@flyspicejet @HarshitJawa2 very nice service. Very helpful.NKK8VR

@manavkalani

Okay so I travelled today with spicejet SG16 from Dubai to Ahmedabad and my experience was so good!! Found this cute crew named Faisal and Hiral, they were so kind, humble and supportive , thank you @flyspicejet for having us on board!! Had a great experience #spicejet

@ZishanS60393195

@flyspicejet #RDV1NW MR_ABRAR_MEHRAJ at SXR Airport such a great response from ground staff. I really appreciate efforts.

@SampatOfficial

@flyspicejet Mudasir Khan provided good service at Srinagar airport. However, why isn't there a self check-in option for SpiceJet?

@mohammadsajid_5

Hello team @flyspicejet flight #SG88 inspite of delayed take off of almost 2 hours from @bangkok from schedule, the overall take off / landing and hospitality provided in between the journey by crew members Rimi ,Riyanka,Badudha, Mehwish is adorable

@ajayjunejaa

@flyspicejet a very good behaviour of gound staff of spices jet over all great experience during check in help thankas. Special thanks for help me Vaibhav Tiwari at Gorakhpur to delhi

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Galgotias University, School of Hospitality & Tourism, India is ranked among the **TOP 50 Best Hospitality and Hotel Management Schools** in the World for 2023 as per CEOWORLD, USA

CEOWORLD Magazine

National Employability Award 2023 (AMCAT Test) for School of Computing Science and Engineering, Galgotias University on account of students performance being among the top 10% Nationally.

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Scan to know more

When: August 12

Where: Across the world

Map not to scale

WORLD ELEPHANT DAY

The World Elephant Day is dedicated to the protection and preservation of elephants around the world. The main objective of this day is to spread awareness regarding conservation of Asian and African elephants along with highlighting the importance of these wonderful creatures in our ecosystem. Various initiatives are taken around the world for spreading awareness about elephants.

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Events

PARSI NEW YEAR

Nowruz (Navroz) marks the first day of the new year by members of the Parsi community. Every year, the festival is amongst the most revered ones in the Zoroastrian community and is celebrated with great fervour around the globe, including India, where the biggest celebrations are held in the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra, among others.

When: August 16
Where: Across the world

JAVED ALI LIVE IN CONCERT

Nothing soothes the mind like soulful music. Take a break from the daily grind and indulge in some melodious tracks at the live concert of music sensation Javed Ali. Enjoy the pop-concert and calm your senses with songs like *Arziyan*, *Jashn-e-Bahaara*, *Tum tak* and more.

When: August 27
Where: Siri Fort Auditorium, New Delhi

> **Their real freedom is not within the boundaries of security, but in the highroad of adventures, full of the risk of new experiences"**

Rabindranath Tagore
Indian poet, Nobel laureate

THIRUVONAM

The 10-day festival of Onam is one of the most cherished events in Kerala, which reaches its apex on the auspicious day of Thiruvonam. Celebrated in Chingam, the first month of the Malayali calendar, it commemorates the return of a mythical, righteous ruler – King Mahabali. This year, Thiruvonam falls on August 29.

When: August 29
Where: Kerala

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HEART OF STONE

Starring 'wonder woman' Gal Gadot along with our very own Bollywood beauty Alia Bhatt, *Heart of Stone* is an upcoming American action spy thriller film directed by Tom Harper. The story revolves around an intelligence operative of a peace-keeping agency who tries to stop a hacker from stealing a valuable and a dangerous weapon.

When: August 11
Where: Netflix

THE BROTHERS HAWTHORNE

The author of this contemporary mystery novel is Jennifer Lynn Barnes. *The Brothers Hawthorne* revolves around brothers Grayson and Jameson who are drawn into twisted games and who - with the help of their brothers and the girl who inherited their grandfather's fortune--must dig deep to decide who they want to be and what each of them will sacrifice to win. The release date of the book is August 29.

COVELONG CLASSIC SURF TURF

Situated on India's south-eastern coast, Tamil Nadu boasts one of the greatest surfing spots in the country. Covelong, a bustling village with beautiful white shores, hosts the annual Surf Turf where surfers gather to enjoy the sport. The competition is held in three categories for men, women and children. It is attended by surf enthusiasts from around the world.

When: August 9 -11
Where: Covelong beach, Kovalam, Chennai

2023 FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

The 9th edition of the FIFA Women's World Cup is underway, with 32 teams competing across 64 matches at 10 different venues, making this year's tournament the biggest to date. This year, it is being jointly hosted by Australia and New Zealand and is also the first to be held in the Southern Hemisphere.

When: On till August 20
Where: Australia and New Zealand

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Udita Dam	Samujjal Dutta	Anu Upadhyay	Arulanand R.

Disclaimer: 'Past record is no guarantee of future job prospects'

Fashion

BARBIE GETS A SPARKLE

All about fusion, sass and sparkle, Joker & Witch's new Glamcore collection is a tribute to the queen of fashion, Barbie. This affordable collection caters to style of both millennial and Gen Z and is crafted in metallic shades, stunning designs and lot of bling!

GLOW NATURAL

The no-makeup makeup look is what everyone always desires. E.l.f. Cosmetics' Halo Glow Liquid Filter offers just that and more. This versatile multi- purpose, liquid glow booster with skin-loving ingredients like hyaluronic acid gives your complexion a soft-focus filter effect.

ON A CHIC HOLIDAY

An ode to a fantasy that traverses through the summer, the Holiday by Outhouse Jewellery displays an idyllic breakaway that blends chic with bold. The brand's new collection makes a stopover at the shore, where cosmopolitan elegance and an athletic aesthetic are epitomised.

LUXURY WEDDINGS

Bridal grandeur is coming to town! A two-day wedding fashion extravaganza is being hosed by FDCI, featuring couturiers from all over India. This first ever ramp-to-retail concept will offer brides and even grooms-to-be the unique opportunity to acquire the finest creations showcased during the India Couture Week.

When: August 5-6
Where: Taj Palace, New Delhi

JJ Valaya's collection from Hyundai India Couture Week 2023 in association with Reliance Brands

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- 08th Best in Law Category

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- 301- 400 in Computer Science
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- 1001-1200 in THE World University Ranking

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

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DARJEELING TEA

Celebrating the **77th Independence Day** of India on August 15, we explore a few Indian cities that are proud possessors of renowned GI tagged products. India has numerous GI tags that showcase the beauty of the country's regional craft and culture.

Geographical Indications (GI) tag is a sign given to products with specific geographic origin

Fondly known as the 'Queen of Hills', Darjeeling is a hill town in West Bengal surrounded by lush green tea plantations and picturesque views of the Himalayas. But one of the most popular attractions of Darjeeling is its premium-quality eponymous tea. Known for its great aroma and taste, it is amongst the best varieties produced in India and the first product in the country to get the Geographical Indications (GI) tag. According to the Tea Board of India, only the tea grown at an elevation ranging from 600 to 2,000 metre above sea level, in 87 identified gardens, qualify as Darjeeling Tea. Due to the popularity of Darjeeling tea, some of the plantations also offer visitors a tour of their rolling fields, making tea plantation trips trendy.

NEARBY

The small hill town of Mirik is located about 40 km from Darjeeling. It boasts beautiful orange orchards and offers stupendous views of the Himalayas. A little farther away, on the banks of the Rangbang river, lies Tabakoshi, a quaint tea village.

DON'T MISS

Do not miss a stunning sunrise over Mount Kanchenjunga and other Himalayan peaks from Tiger Hill. Hike up pre-dawn for mesmerising views!

MUST SEE

Journey through lush green hills on the popular Toy Train. It offers scenic joy rides (a round trip takes about two hours) between Darjeeling and Ghum.

EAT & SHOP

Enjoy steaming momos, warm *thukpa* (noodle soup) and *sel roti* (ring-shaped fried doughs). Buy woollens and souvenirs like painted scrolls and Tibetan handicrafts.

The nearest well-connected airport is Bagdogra. SpiceJet connects direct and one-stop flights to Bagdogra from Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Dharamshala, Pune and many more destinations in India. Book now at www.spicejet.com.

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KHURJA POTTERY

Also known as the 'ceramic city', Khurja boasts a variety of crockery, ceramic tile works and pottery

With colourful ceramic pottery, clay pots and freshly-glazed products - the ceramic ware of Khurja in Uttar Pradesh is said to date back several centuries, to the reign of king Feroz Shah Tuqhlaq. Khurja pottery has not only received the GI tag but has also been recognised under the Government of India's 'One District, One Product' scheme in UP. The city boasts many ceramic factories with each rolling out hundreds of products - from kitchenware and glazed vases to sanitary ware and tiles, and more!

KNOW WHAT

Khurja is located at a distance of about 100 km from New Delhi. Take a trip to the national capital and explore architectural marvels like Lotus Temple, Qutab (Qutb) Minar, Humayun's Tomb and others.

DON'T MISS

Nearby, visit the historic city of Bulandshahr, where among other attractions stands the unique 18th-century Kuchesar Fort, also known as the Mud Fort. It's surrounded by 100 acres of forest.

MUST SEE

Go for a heritage walk in the bustling lanes of Khurja and explore its age-old buildings. See some of the city's oldest buildings like Lala Mewaram ka Kamra, Seth Gangaram Bhawan, Devi ka mandir and JAS College.

EAT & SHOP

Cuisine specialities from Khurja include *khurchan* (a sweet made with *khoya*) and *kanji vada* (a variation of *kanji*, a popular drink). Visit Budh Bazaar for affordable deals on clothes and other items.

The nearest well-connected airport is Delhi. SpiceJet connects direct and one-stop flights to Delhi from Shillong, Khajuraho, Guwahati, Dharamshala, Leh, Bengaluru and many more cities in India. Book now at www.spicejet.com.

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KUTCH EMBROIDERY

A unique landscape of salt flats, Kutch is famous for its vibrant traditional embroidery

Image: imbelossien

While Kutch (in Gujarat) is known for its shimmery white desert and archeological sites, the region also boasts colourful crafts and embroideries, which is popularly known as Kutch Embroidery. Hallmarked by beads, mirrors and extensive thread-and-needle work, it is a reflection of the region's colourful lifestyle and culture. Due to its intrinsic work and distinct patterns, Kutch Embroidery has received the GI tag. Kutch is famous for the unique Kutch Desert Sanctuary and the Great Rann of Kutch, which is a stunning expanse of salt desert. During monsoon, it fills up with water and becomes a magical site! In the city of Bhuj, do explore the resplendent Aina Mahal.

KNOW WHAT

Visit the Kalo Dungar (the Black Hill) which marks the highest point in Kutch at an height of 462 metre. You can get a great view of the remarkable white Rann of Kutch, a sprawling area covered with white salt.

DON'T MISS

Experience the beauty of the Rann of Kutch at the Rann Utsav. Indulge in singing and dancing with other activities that highlight the culture and tradition of the area.

MUST SEE

Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Dholavira and take a step back in time to the Harappan Civilization. Do make a trip to the serene Mandvi beach at the southern most point of the Kutch district.

EAT & SHOP

Indulge in the delicious-tangy *dabeli*, a popular dish from the Mandvi town of Kutch, and the traditional *Kachchhi thali*. Buy beautiful Rogan art and local handicrafts.

The well-connected airport is Ahmedabad. SpiceJet connects direct and one-stop flights to Ahmedabad from Delhi, Bagdogra, Dharamshala, Srinagar and many more cities in India. Book now at www.spicejet.com.

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KOLHAPURI CHAPPALS

This prosperous industrial town in Maharashtra is famous for its eponymous handmade *chappals*, mythology and food

Of the many things that make Kolhapur a well-known tourist destination, the popularity of its namesake handmade footwear Kolhapuri *chappals* tops the list. Recognising the footwear's journey from its humble origins to the high table of fashion, the product was given a GI tag. Sitting by the Panchganga river, Kolhapur is surrounded by the Sahyadri mountains. It is a city of forts, temples and palaces. Kolhapur also has a long history of *kushti* (wrestling) and has produced many noted wrestlers.

Image: upload.wikimedia

KNOW WHAT

Trek to the scenic Panhala Fort or explore flora and fauna at Radhanagari Wildlife Sanctuary. Visit the picturesque Rankala Lake and Amba Ghat, a beautiful mountain pass nearby.

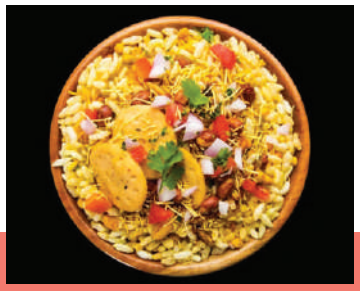
DON'T MISS

Visit the revered Mahalaxmi Temple. It is said the city is named after a demon Kolhasur, who was killed by Goddess Mahalaxmi but while dying he asked for the place to be named after him.

MUST SEE

The Shree Chhatrapati Shahu Museum is a popular attraction. The museum displays memorabilia belonging to the Kolhapur rulers, including royal apparel, silver elephant saddles and more.

EAT & SHOP



Shop for Kolhapuri *saaj* (a special type of necklace), sarees and Kolhapuri *chappals*. Try the famous Kolhapuri *bhel*, Kolhapuri *sukka* (dry) mutton, and *tambda rassa* (spicy-red mutton curry).

The well-connected airport is Pune and Goa. SpiceJet connects direct and one-stop flights from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bhavnagar and many more cities in India. Book now at www.spicejet.com.

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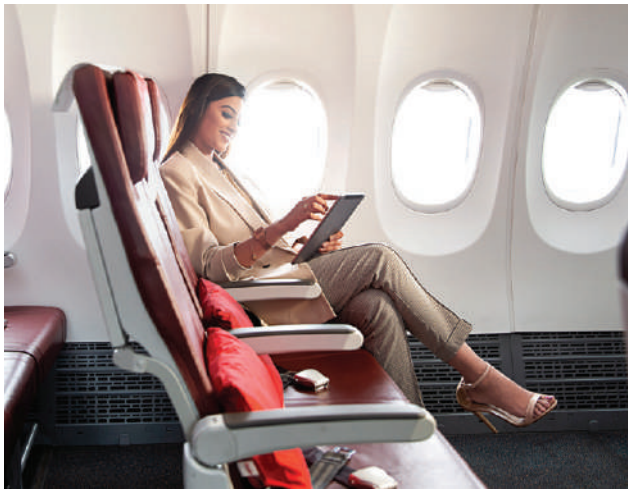

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THREADS of a Nation

Handmade textiles have been a part of India's freedom struggle. This month, as we celebrate our Independence Day and also the National Handloom Day, let's take pride in India's handwoven heritage

TEXT: GAUTAM GUPTA

In India, handwoven textiles have been closely interwined with the freedom struggle. The movement to promote the use of indigenous textiles and handloom products became a symbol of economic resistance and self-reliance, fostering a sense of national pride and unity. Wearing khadi, a handspun and handwoven fabric, became a powerful statement of defiance against British-made fabrics. Even today, the legacy of handloom continues to be celebrated as part of the country's cultural heritage and a testament to the spirit of Independence.

India has a diverse textile heritage. Every corner of the country is home to unique textile crafts that are quite captivativing due their aesthetics and techniques. From the serene ghats of Varanasi and the lanes of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh to the bustling cities of Bengaluru and Mysuru in Karnataka, the serene landscapes of Guwahati and Sualkuchi in Assam, the temple towns of Kanchipuram and Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu, and the cultural hubs of Bishnupur and Dhaniakhali in West Bengal, each region offers a distinct textile experience. Let's explore our handwoven and handloom textile heritage on the National Handloom Day, observed on August 7.

Gautam Gupta is co-owner of the couture label Asha Gautam and founder of GG by Asha Gautam. His mission is to revive vintage designs and aid the Indian fashion and handloom society.

VARANASI AND LUCKNOW

In the temple town of Varanasi, the age-old tradition of weaving Banarasi silk is a sight to behold. This exquisite brocade fabric is woven with silk, and gold or silver threads, resulting in intricate patterns and motifs. Renowned for its opulence, Banarasi silk has been worn by royalty and nobility for centuries. To delve deeper into this craft, a visit to the Weaver's Service Centre or the Silk Weaving Center is highly recommended. Near Varanasi, Bhadohi is a carpet weaving hub.

Lucknow, the city of *nawabs*, is famous for *chikankari* embroidery. This delicate and elegant art form involves stitching fine embroidery to create floral or geometric designs. *Chikankari* is said to have been introduced in Lucknow by Mughal empress Nurjahan. Exploring *Chikankari* workshops in Lucknow provides an opportunity to see artisans embroidering various fabrics like cotton, silk, georgette and chiffon.

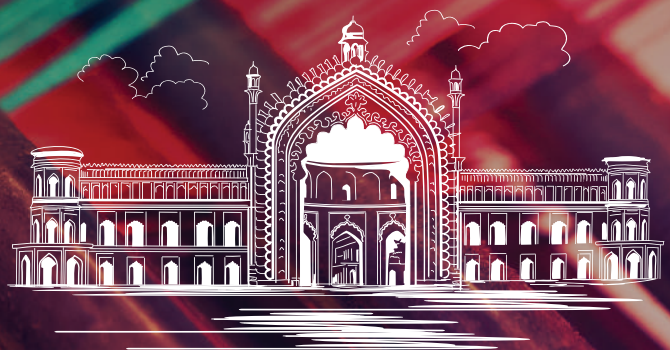
Tip

Engage with artisans and understand the painstaking process behind the creation of these exquisite textiles. It's important to appreciate and support the artisans' hard work by paying a fair price for their craftsmanship. Always check the quality and authenticity before making a purchase.

While there

In Varanasi, do visit the *ghats* along river Ganges. In Lucknow, do not forget to taste delicious *kachori sabzi*, *chaat* and *biryani*.

Banarasi brocade sarees are made of finely woven silk and decorated with intricate designs using golden *zari*



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GUWAHATI AND SUALKUCHI

Assam is renowned for its exquisite silk weaving, particularly the *muga*, *eri*, and *paat* varieties unique to the state. Around 40 km away from state capital Guwahati, is the Sualkuchi village, which is often called the "Manchester of the East". It provides an opportunity to witness the traditional handloom weaving of Assamese silk. Muga silk sarees, traditional *mekhela-chadors*, *gamosas*, and other traditional garments can be found here.

Sualkuchi offers a chance to witness the complete process of silk production; from rearing of silkworms to spinning, dyeing and weaving silk fabrics. Interacting with local weavers and artisans reveals the beauty of their craftsmanship as they create intricate designs and patterns on their looms. In Guwahati, explore the diverse range of Assamese silks at shops in Paltan Bazaar.

Tip

For fully appreciating the art of Assamese silk weaving, consider visiting during the festive season of Bihu when weavers showcase their best creations. Attend traditional weaving workshops or dyeing workshops to learn about the different techniques and processes used in Assamese textiles.

While there

In Guwahati, offer prayers at the hilltop Kamakhya Temple and enjoy a sunset cruise on the Brahmaputra river. Also plan a trip to Kaziranga National Park, home to the one-horned rhino.

There are three major types of indigenous wild silks produced in Assam. They are golden *muga*, white *paat* and *eri* silk

Image: Los Muertos Crew

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Bengaluru, known for its vibrant and cosmopolitan culture, also boasts of a rich heritage of handloom weaving. The city is home to several communities of weavers who produce various fabrics, including silk, cotton, khadi and wool. Nearby weaving villages like Ramanagara, Channapatna and Kinnal offer a glimpse into the artisans' work.

Mysore has a long and royal history of producing silk, which is 100 per cent pure and the designs are made with with pure gold *zari*. Initially, the silk fabrics were manufactured for the royal family.

Ilkal sarees, made in the town of Ilkal in the Bagalkot district, are distinct with their cotton body and silk *pallu* (one end) joined by a special technique called *kumbi*. Usually adorned in red, maroon, or black, these sarees feature geometric patterns or temple designs.

Mysore silk is made of the finest quality of natural silk yarn obtained from cocoons reared in the old Mysuru areas

Tip

Enthusiasts can explore other varieties of silk sarees in Karnataka, such as the Molakalmuru silk from the Chitradurga district.

While there

In Mysuru, visit the grand palace and while driving from Bengaluru, stop at the Sri Chamundeshwari and Sri Nandi temples and the popular Chunchanakatte Waterfalls.

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KANCHIPURAM AND THANJAVUR

Tamil Nadu is renowned for its exquisite silk sarees and invites textile enthusiasts to explore the ancient towns of Kanchipuram and Thanjavur. Kanchipuram, also known as the "Silk City," is famous for its handwoven silk sarees. These sarees are known for their intricate designs, vibrant colours and fine quality, often featuring motifs inspired by nature, mythology, and temple architecture.

Thanjavur, celebrated for its artistic heritage, is known for its stunning hand-produced silk sarees. These sarees are similar to Kanchipuram sarees but have a distinctive, wider and a more elaborate border. Skilled artisans create intricate designs on silk fabrics using gold and silver leaves.

Kanchipuram silk sarees are mostly worn during weddings and other special occasions

While there

In Kanchipuram, take a tour of several temples, including the Kailasanathar Temple. In Thanjavur do not miss the exquisite sculptures at the Brihadeeshwara Temple.

Tip

When purchasing silk sarees, pay attention to the authenticity of the product. Look for the Silk Mark certification, which ensures the sarees are genuine and made with pure silk.

Image: rasvriti.com

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BISHNUPUR AND DHANIAKHALI

West Bengal's textile trails lead to the culturally rich towns of Bishnupur and Dhaniakhali (Dhanekhali). Bishnupur is famous for its exquisite Baluchari silk sarees, woven with silk threads dyed in vibrant colours. These sarees feature intricate woven motifs depicting scenes from mythological epics.

Dhaniakhali specialises in producing the iconic Dhaniakhali cotton sarees, which bear the Geographical Indication tag. These sarees are known for their distinctive checkered pattern, lightweight, and comfortable nature, making them ideal for everyday wear as well as formal occasions.

Bishnupur weavers mostly use mulberry silk to produce Baluchari sarees

Tip

Immerse yourself in the cultural ambience of Bishnupur and Dhanekhali by attending local festivals and craft fairs. These events provide an opportunity to witness live demonstrations, interact with weavers, and engage in discussions about the significance of these textiles in the region's cultural heritage.

While there

Bishnupur is famous for unique terracotta temples with ornate carvings, such as Rasmancha.

Image: aditri.co.in

Dr. Sohini Sastri

Life Coach and President Award WinningAstrologer

Best astrologer in India, Dr. Sohini Sastri, does not need an eloquent introduction. Currently she holds the record of "most searched astrologer in India". Dr. Sohini Sastri has received multiple national awards and recognized as 'best astrologer in Delhi', 'best astrologer in India' by media houses like Times of India, Business Standard, Hindustan Times, Amar Ujala etc. She has also been felicitated by several universities and honored with degrees like Doctorate; D.Litt.

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Dr. Sohini Sastri: The women who changes the dynamic of Vedic Astrology

"We all have certain role to play for the sake of mankind and those who are privileged should always stretch their hands towards those who are in need." – this is the philosophy Dr. Sohini Sastri believes and maintains. Dr. Sohini Sastri has been following the path of spirituality since her early age and always keen to help her followers with the divine knowledge and power she possessed. They say, if you can achieve one quality in life, 'be kind'. Dr. Sastri manifested that saying, through her journey so far. Her wholehearted involvement in numerous social activities, humbleness, and candid nature helps her to stand out from others.

Astrologer, Life Coach, and Philanthropist Dr. Sohini Sastri specializes in Krishnamurti Paddhati, popularly known as KP astrology. It is regarded as the most accurate system of present time.

Along with Vedic astrology, Dr. Sohini Sastri also excels at Palmistry, Numerology, Vastu Shastra, and Color therapy. Being a certified Gemologist, she always recommends and helps her followers to choose genuine gemstones & rudraksh. She has never backed down from spreading the positivity she draws from her spiritual practices. Over the last few decades, she has helped thousands of her followers with astrological prediction and cosmic energy. They say, she has a divine aura and positive vibes around her, which gives a calmness and a sense of certainty to the most disturbed person. In an interview, Dr. Sastri revealed how spirituality and her belief in supreme power has helped her to keep calm and overcome all the difficulties. She has suggested the same for us. She says, "Think one step at a time, keep your calm, meditate, and do something good and impactful for the society through your journey. In the process, you will realize you are not alone, the universe is working for you."

Her enormous contribution to astrology and social reformation made her part of numerous esteemed communities in both astrology and social awareness sector.Among numerous awards and accolades Dr. Sasri has received, few of the latest are -

- Champion of Change, 2018 from Honorable Vice President Shri Venkaiah Naidu
- Champion of Change, 2019 from former President Late Shri Pranab Mukherjee
- Pride of Nation, 2019 from Honorable Defense Minister Shri Rajnath Singh
- Indian Achievers Award, 2020 from Honorable Union HRD Minister Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal
- Champion of Change, 2020 from Honorable Governor of Maharashtra Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari
- Felicitated by Governor of West Bengal Shri Jagdeep DhanKhar
- Felicitated by Honorable Governor of Uttarakhand Shrimoti Baby Rani Mouriya
- Femina Brand Award, 2021 by Femina India
- Honoured by World Book of Record 2022 for her contribution in astrology, palmistry, vastu shastra etc.

To spread awareness about astrology she has started writing books in laymen language and those books are getting immense popularity. Within a very short career span as an author, she has already published 3 books, i.e. A Complete Guide to Astrology, Handbook of Corporate and Professional Astrology, and Career Astrology Made Easy.

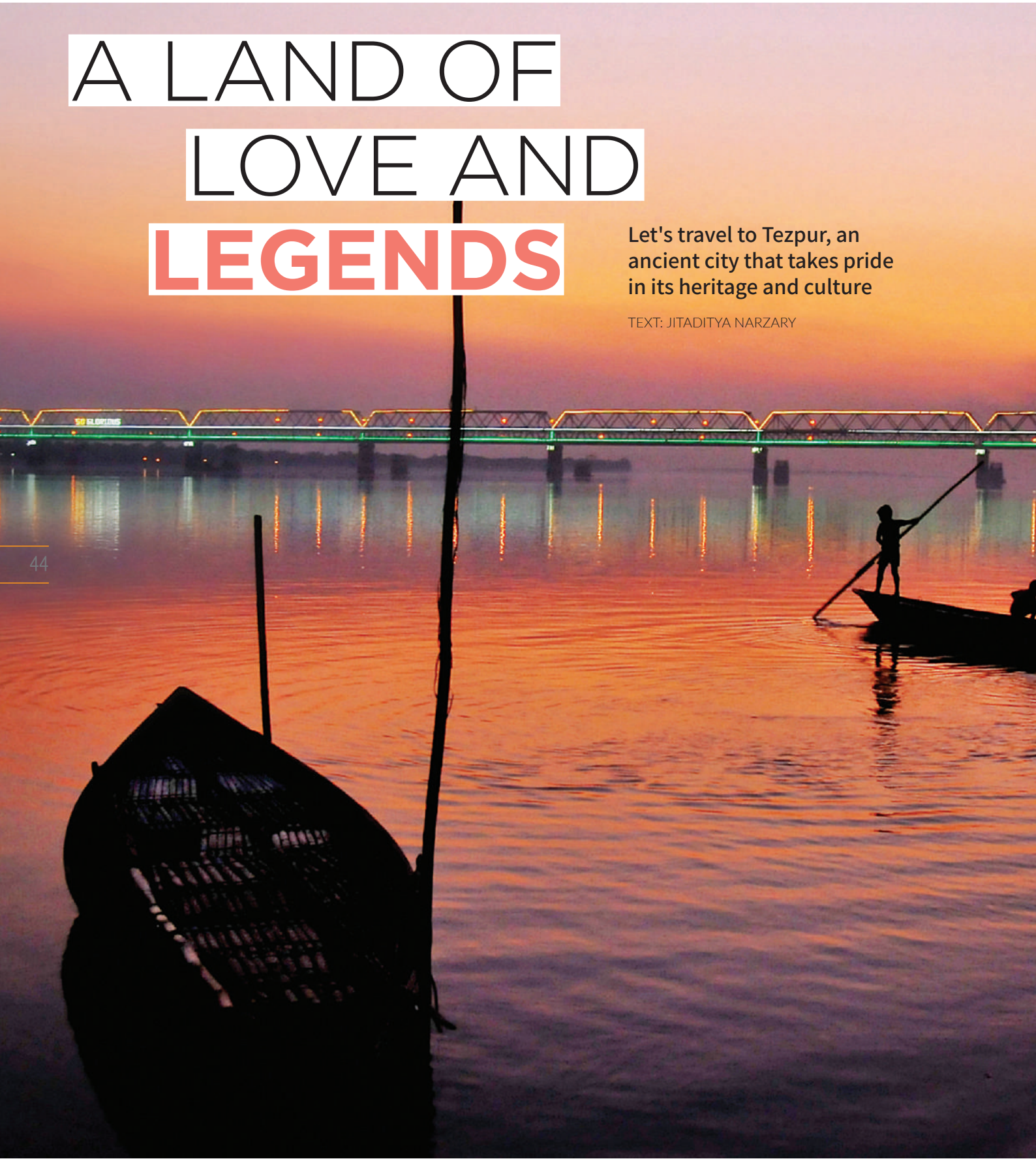
Being a woman entrepreneur, she always expresses the need of woman empowerment and how it can help the society. She says, "Be proud of being a woman, celebrate your womanhood".

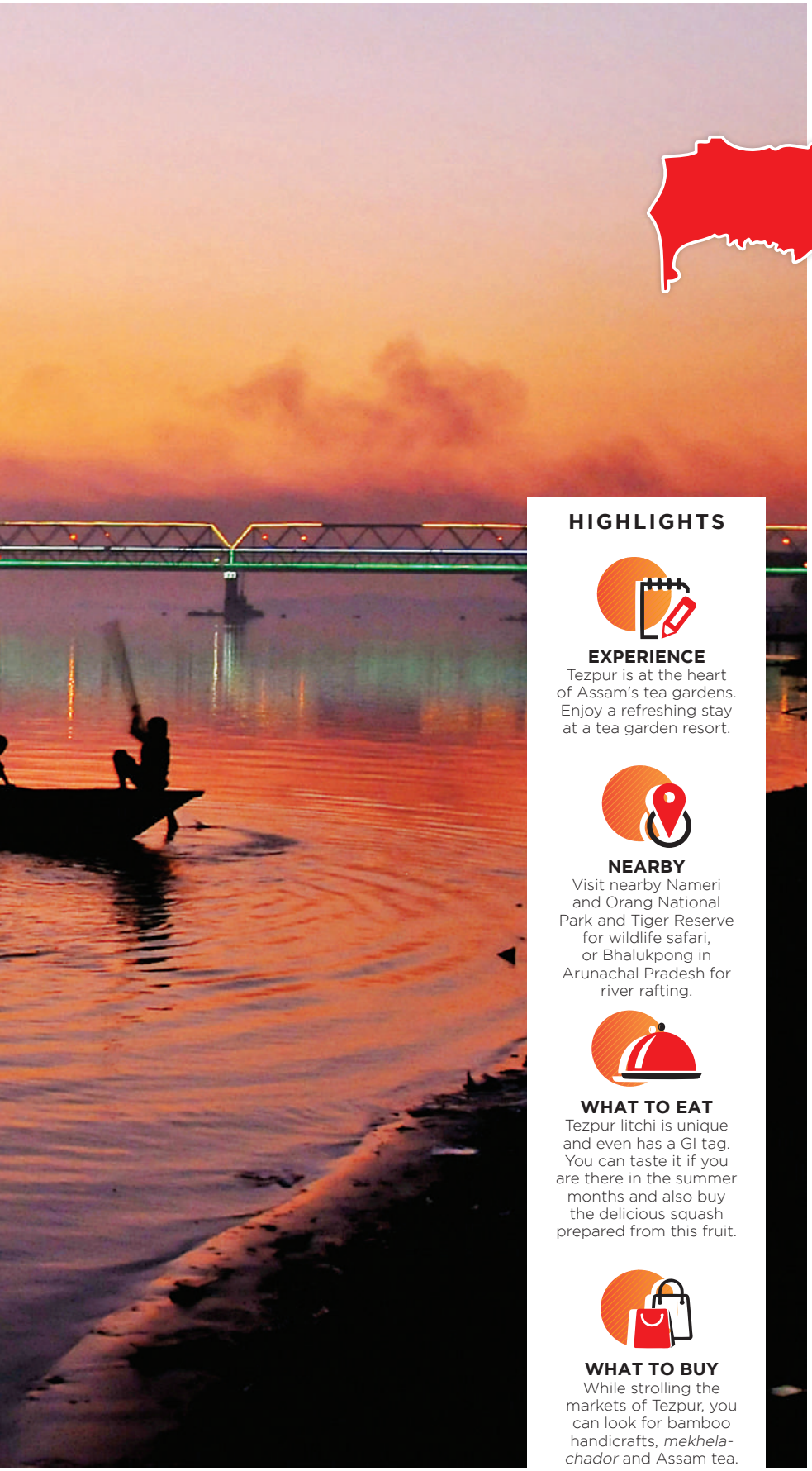
We can all agree that she is creating an impact on the society in many fields, be it astrology, women empowerment, or social activities; Dr. Sohini Sastri is the name we are, and we will be hearing repeatedly.

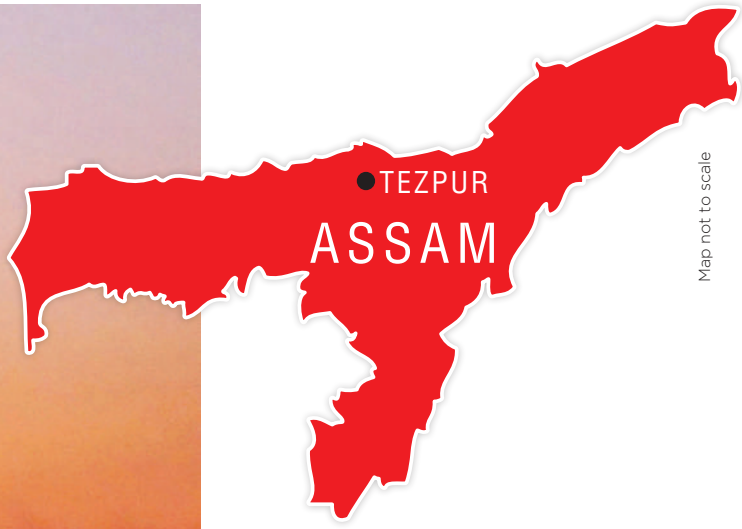
A LAND OF LOVE AND LEGENDS

Let's travel to Tezpur, an ancient city that takes pride in its heritage and culture

TEXT: JITADITYA NARZARY







HIGHLIGHTS

EXPERIENCE
Tezpur is at the heart of Assam's tea gardens. Enjoy a refreshing stay at a tea garden resort.

NEARBY
Visit nearby Nameri and Orang National Park and Tiger Reserve for wildlife safari, or Bhalukpong in Arunachal Pradesh for river rafting.

WHAT TO EAT
Tezpur litchi is unique and even has a GI tag. You can taste it if you are there in the summer months and also buy the delicious squash prepared from this fruit.

WHAT TO BUY
While strolling the markets of Tezpur, you can look for bamboo handicrafts, *mekhela-chador* and Assam tea.

Mythology says, the story of Tezpur revolves around the extremely powerful king Banasura, who was considered invincible as he had been blessed by Lord Shiva. He had a beautiful daughter named Usha, who was coming of age. Many suitors came asking for her hand but Banasura refused them all and locked her in a fortress named Agnigarh. An imprisoned Usha dreamt of a young man and fell in love with him. She described him to her friend Chitralekha, who painted his image. The young man turned out to be Lord Krishna's grandson, Aniruddha. Using her magical powers, Chitralekha transported Aniruddha to the fort where he married Usha. Banasura found out about this and imprisoned Aniruddha. A battle between lord Shiva (who had vowed to protect Banasura) and Lord Krishna ensued in which Banasura surrendered. The two lovebirds were united. However, the war left many dead. Legends say after the battle, the kingdom was left drenched in blood thus, the region came to be known as Tezpur or the 'city of blood'!

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TREASURE TROVE

A beautiful city sitting between the snow-capped Himalayas and verdant hills on the banks of River Brahmaputra, Tezpur's soul reverberates with ancient tales that come to life in the many

Must visit

TAWANG
Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang has many attractions such as Tawang monastery, Gorichen Peak, Madhuri Lake, Gorsam Chorten Zemithang stupa and Nuranang waterfall.

BHALUKPONG
Located around 60 km from Tezpur, Bhalukpong is known for adventure sports, the Pakhui Wildlife Sanctuary and Tipi Orchidarium, which hosts thousands of orchids! It is also well-known for angling and festivals like Solung and Losar.

KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK
Situated around 100 km away, the Kaziranga National Park is an escape into the wild. You can also visit the Kakochang waterfalls and Deopurbat ruins nearby.

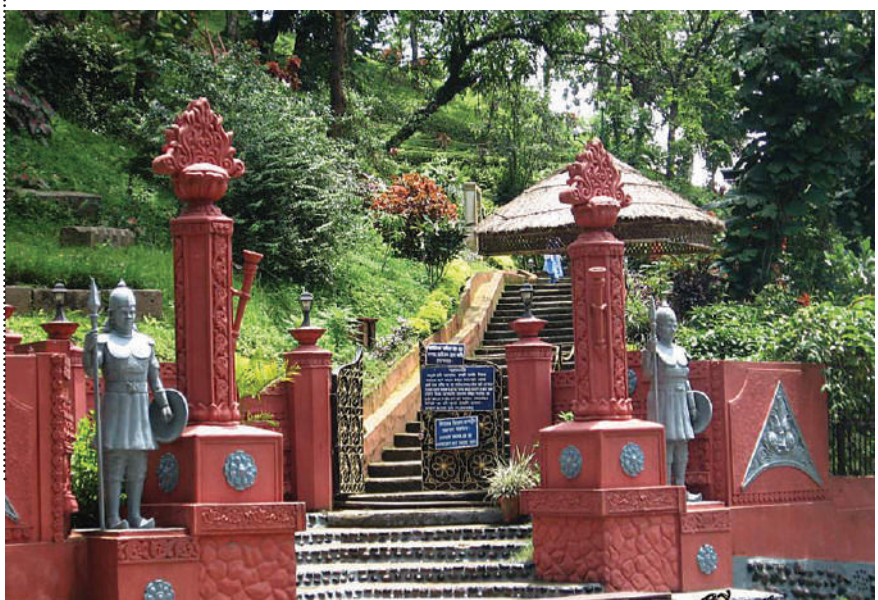
Image: rbhoi.gov.in

RI-BHOI
Carved out from the erstwhile East Khasi Hills District, Ri Bhoi is one of the most beautiful districts in Meghalaya. Do visit the stunning Umiam Lake and the adjacent Lum Nehru Park. At Umiam, enjoy nature's beauty, and watersports facilities including sailing, water skiing and water scooter rides.

temples and archaeological ruins that dot its landscape. Among Tezpur's ancient temples, the most famous is the Mahabhairab Temple (dedicated to Lord Shiva), which is said to have been built by Banasura. Every year, a fair is held here on Shivratri. The Holeswar (Haleswar) Temple, also dedicated to Lord Shiva, is equally popular. Tezpur's historical lineage lives on in the several ruins, unmissable amongst which are Da Parbatia and Bamuni Hills. Da Parbatia is probably the most intriguing, as it was believed to be a medieval temple till the 1897 earthquake revealed a Gupta-era doorway! Similarly, many sculptural ruins and stone carvings dating back to the 9th and 10th centuries can be found at Bamuni Hills. Another must-see spot is Agnigarh, where Usha is said to have been imprisoned. While statues depict her love story and the battle, take the stairway leading up to the top of the hill for spectacular views of Tezpur and the mighty Brahmaputra.

GREEN AND SERENE
Tezpur boasts some of the most scenic parks and lakes in Assam. One of the most popular is Chitralekha Udyan, a beautiful park with two

Tezpur is often called the cultural capital of Assam. Some of the state's most famous residents - Bishnuprasad Rabha, Jyoti Prasad Agarwala and Bhupen Hazarika - have had associations with the city.



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Guwahati – Varanasi	16:30	18:15	Daily
Guwahati – Patna	05:55	07:50	Daily
Patna – Guwahati	14:25	16:05	Daily
Patna – Amritsar	08:10	10:50	Daily
Amritsar – Patna	11:15	14:00	Daily
Patna – Hyderabad[2]	13:25	15:30	1, 3, 5 & 7
Hyderabad – Patna[2]	10:40	12:45	1, 3, 5 & 7
Patna – Bengaluru[3]	12:00	14:40	Daily
Bengaluru – Patna[3]	15:30	18:20	Daily
Varanasi – Mumbai[4]	11:20	13:40	2, 4, 6 & 7
Mumbai – Varanasi[4]	08:25	10:45	2, 4, 6 & 7
Hyderabad – Varanasi[2]	11:10	13:10	2, 4 & 6
Varanasi – Hyderabad[2]	13:55	15:50	2, 4 & 6
Hyderabad – Shirdi[5]	08:30	10:00	Daily
Shirdi – Hyderabad[5]	10:25	11:50	Daily
Madurai – Colombo[6]	13:15	14:25	Daily (Except Wed)
Colombo – Madurai[6]	15:10	16:20	Daily (Except Wed)
Kochi – Chennai	08:40	09:55	Daily
Chennai – Kochi	06:50	08:10	Daily

EXCLUSIVE

[1]Starting from 28th October, 2023. [2]Starting from 1st September, 2023.
[3]Starting from 15th September, 2023. [4]Starting from 5th September, 2023.
[5]Starting from 2nd October, 2023. [6]Starting from 20th August, 2023.

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CULTURE

Tezpur has always been a hub of literature, art and culture of Assam. Even the first Assamese film was produced from here even before Assam had a proper cinema hall.

Image: commons.wikimedia.org

massive ornamented stone pillars and other sculptural remnants. Other popular spots in the town include lakes like Padum Pukhuri and Harzara Pukhuri. You can also enjoy a long walk up the hill to Kanaklata Udyan, named after Kanaklata Baruah, a freedom fighter. Tezpur also has some quiet neighbourhoods with remnants of the colonial era, including the Dak Bungalow, old Court Building, the Church of Epiphany and The Station Club.

CALL OF THE WILD

There are several major wildlife destinations around Tezpur as well. Nameri National Park and Tiger Reserve, not far from the Arunachal Pradesh border and an approximate two-hour drive from Tezpur, is an excellent escape for nature lovers. Apart from the likes of elephants, tigers, leopards and several types of deer and primates, it is also home to the white-winged wood duck (Assamese term - *deo haah*), the state bird of Assam. On the other hand, if you want to see the state animal of Assam, the one-horned rhinoceros (Assamese term - *gor*), you can drive to Orang National Park, about an hour away.

GATEWAY TO HOLIDAYS

The most underrated aspect of Tezpur is its location. Apart from the local attractions, it acts as a gateway to some of the most popular tourist destinations of Arunachal Pradesh, especially the Bhalukpong- Bomdila-Dirang-Tawang route. New Arunachal circuits like Shergaon-Rupa as well as Seijosa (known to boast of varieties of hornbills) are also a quick drive away from Tezpur.

Jitaditya Narzary, is a content marketer and a travel writer. He started his travel blog 'The Travelling Slacker' back in 2011.

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INTO THE *Dragon*

Bhutan is the land of smiles, Buddhist chants and high Himalayan peaks. Get rid of your inner dragons and spread some cheer on an off-the-beaten path

TEXT: MANJULIKA PRAMOD

In this awe-inspiring country, enshrouded by the Himalayas, every journey unfolds an enlivening experience. Exclusive and tiny, Bhutan or Land of the Thunder Dragon (Druk Yul) resonates with indigenous local flairs, pristine Himalayan hamlets, dazzlingly majestic *dzongs*, happy and boundless smiles, and thriving Bhutanese culture. Irrespective of where in Bhutan you are, be welcomed by flawlessly blue skies, forested mountains, undulating seas of golden fields, old fortresses, monasteries and colourful traditional houses.

Best Time to Visit: The best time to visit Bhutan is between October and December when the skies are clear and sunny.

Flying into Bhutan, you will start your journey at Paro Valley, where the country's only international airport is located. The Paro Valley is not only home to the most scenic airport, a 600- year- old suspension bridge, architectural marvels and divine mountains, it is also the abode of the breathtaking Paro-Taktsang, a monastery hinging on a cliff, which is probably the most Instagrammable attraction of Bhutan. From here, you can explore Chele La Pass, Ha Valley, Punakha, Thimphu and other hidden gems.

The most popular tourist circuit covers the wonders of the three cities Thimphu, Punakha and Paro

TREKKING AND HIKING

One of Bhutan's most popular tourist destinations and trekking spots is the Tiger's Nest monastery (Paro Taktsang). At the height of 3,120 metre, the iconic complex of buildings precariously perched on a cliff in the Paro Valley, makes for an extraordinary site. The route passes through pretty blue pine forests with lovely viewpoint breaks. Though the trek is an adventurous one, the 700 steep stone steps at the finishing point add an extra level of difficulty. As you climb, the mystical monastery makes breathtaking appearances, its white walls topped with golden pyramids set dramatically against the grey mountain face. But other than this, there are countless easy rambles and challenging high-altitude hikes in Bhutan, including the Snowmen Trek, the Dagala Trek, the Bhumtang Owl Trek.

NIGHT IN WILDERNESS

Lulled to sleep by a gushing river after a day of hiking, angling, star gazing and feasting on wholesome Bhutanese cuisine, camping under the open sky is one of the most sought-after experiences in Bhutan. Camping in the Punakha Valley, sleeping by rivers and waking up to the most picturesque and surreal sunrise views are experiences of a lifetime. Go for a walk, observe the slower pace of life and lose yourself in the wilderness of the kingdom. Gongphu is one of the best birding

Don't miss

The most popular tourist circuit covers the wonders of the three cities--Thimphu, Punakha, and Paro, including the legendary Tiger's Nest Monastery and Bumthang Valley. Some of the unmissable attractions are the soaring Buddha Dordenma statue, Punakha Dzong that is among Bhutan's oldest and most striking monasteries, the large Rinpung Dzong monastery, Dochula Pass and the National Museum in Paro. The suspension bridge on the Pho Chhu river is stunning and a trip to the Motithang Takin Preserve is a must for a glimpse of Bhutan's national animal, the rare takin.

campsites, while Gangtey or the scenic Phobjikha valley and Khotokha are quite popular too. Most of the campsites are often strategically built beside lakes and waterfalls.

VIRGIN VILLAGES

Following the off-beaten track in Bhutan may not necessarily mean traveling too far. All you need is to troop uphill as well as downhill, gasping over the verdant enchanting valleys, bright green meadows and brimming rivers to spot virgin villages and cosy towns that are quaint and self-satisfied. Hamlets like Ha, Gangtey, Dhur, Ura, Sopsokha etc. are perfect to experience the idyllic vistas and the local traditional style of living. Haa, also known as Hidden Land Rice Valley, is one of the most beautiful and peaceful districts of Bhutan. Phobjikha and Gangtey Valley are some of the most stunning natural spots. Wochu village is known for its blacksmiths' artistry. Khoma village is famous for Kishsuthara, a silk textile woven by women. The Trong Heritage Village

DID YOU KNOW?
Do try the homemade alcoholic drinks *ara* and *singchang*

TASTE OF THE HIMALAYAS
Bhutanese cuisine is nothing less than an offbeat and adventurous experience with generous use of yak milk cheese. *Ema datshi,* the national dish of Bhutan, is made from a special combination of Bhutanese chillies and cheese sauce, where the cheese is made from yak milk. Also, the locals use maize, buckwheat and red rice with indigenous vegetables. Some of the dishes like *kewa datshi* (potato cheese stew), *jasha maru* (spicy chicken) and various types of dumplings are a must-try. Eat at a local home and enjoy their humble breakfast of rice and vegetables with some chili chutney.

is known for its traditional stone masonry houses. The local Dhur Tshechu Festival is a lovely reason to travel to Dhur.

RAFTING

The word "chhu" means river or water in Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan. The Himalayan Kingdom is home to abundant perennial rivers, qualifying as a perfect destination for rafting, all around the year. Both seasoned as well as beginners make a beeline for Mo Chhu and Pho Chhu rivers. On its seven-km route, Mo Chhu river offers several easy rapids. The Po Chhu river dares professionals with several hard-hitting rapids. Mangde Chhu, Paro Chhu, Wang Chhu and Kuri Chhu are suitable for rafting too, promising gorgeous backdrops, waterfalls, national parks, stunning gorges, deep ridges, and abundant local settlements.

In Focus

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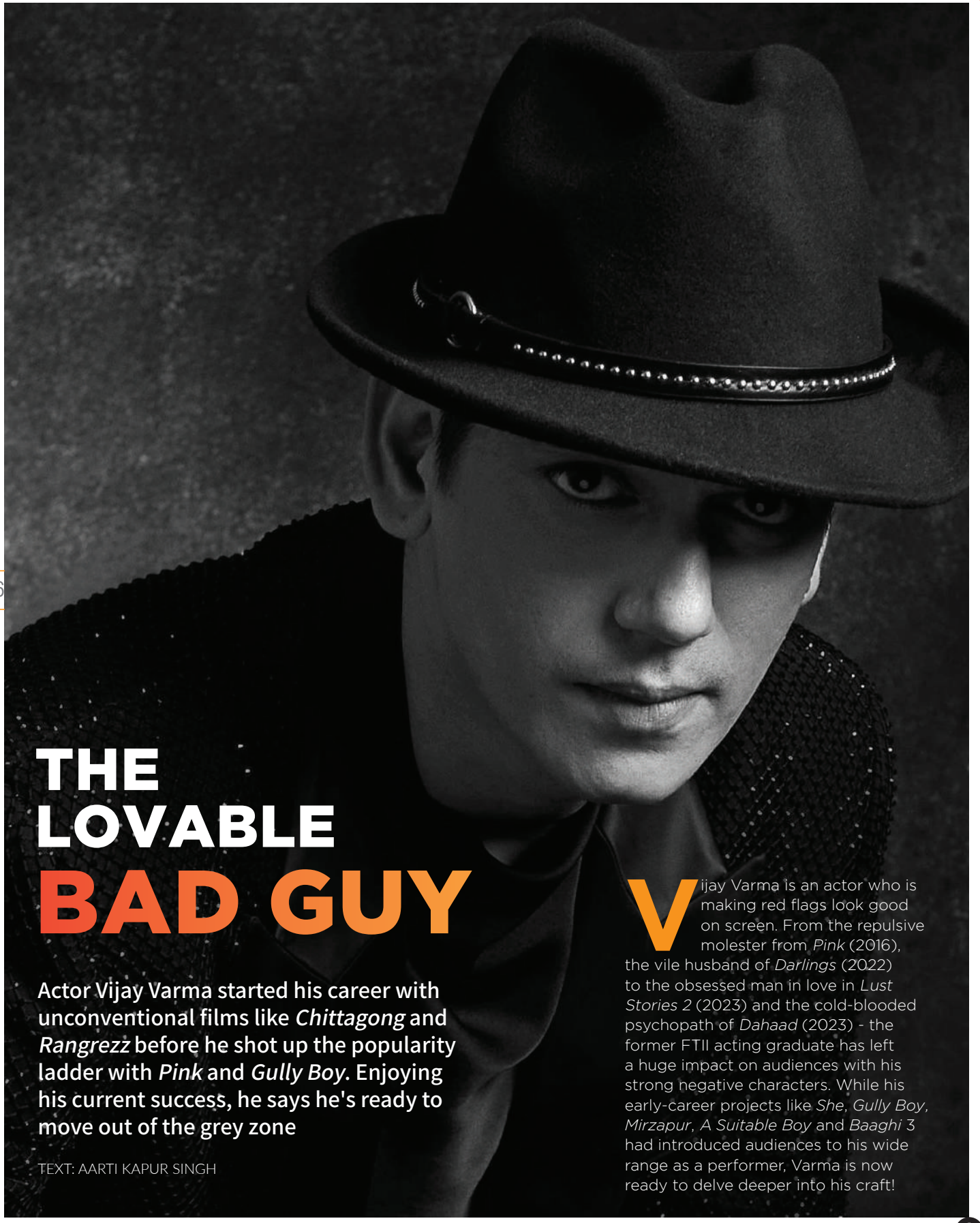

THE LOVABLE BAD GUY

Actor Vijay Varma started his career with unconventional films like *Chittagong* and *Rangrezz* before he shot up the popularity ladder with *Pink* and *Gully Boy*. Enjoying his current success, he says he's ready to move out of the grey zone

TEXT: AARTI KAPUR SINGH

Vijay Varma is an actor who is making red flags look good on screen. From the repulsive molester from *Pink* (2016), the vile husband of *Darlings* (2022) to the obsessed man in love in *Lust Stories 2* (2023) and the cold-blooded psychopath of *Dahaad* (2023) - the former FTII acting graduate has left a huge impact on audiences with his strong negative characters. While his early-career projects like *She*, *Gully Boy*, *Mirzapur*, *A Suitable Boy* and *Baaghi 3* had introduced audiences to his wide range as a performer, Varma is now ready to delve deeper into his craft!

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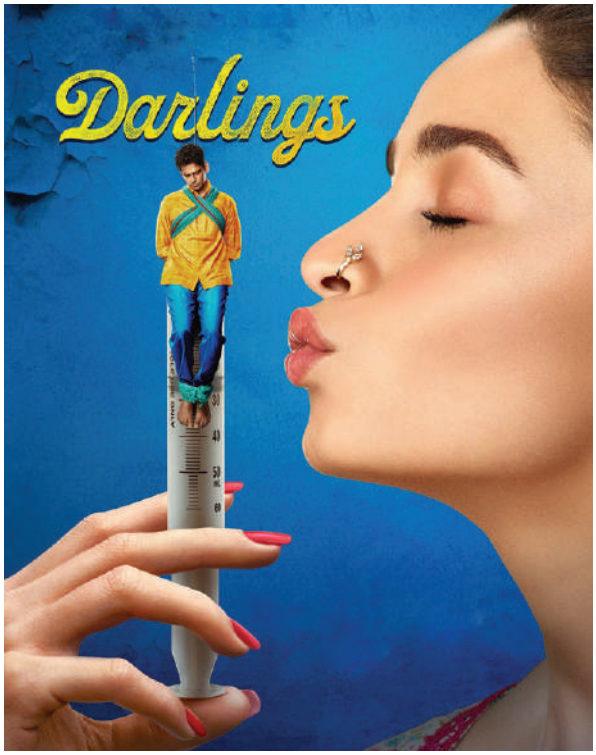

"Initially, I was unsure of how to go about things, especially in terms of work. *Gully Boy* fixed a lot of things."

What was your most significant learning in the world of acting?

Patience. The last three to four years have taught me a lot of that. I am not saying that as a grouse; I am grateful my patience paid off. Initially I was unsure of how to go about things - especially in terms of getting work. *Gully Boy* fixed a lot of things. The only constant till then was: 'we love you as an actor, but can't cast you for this part', which reminded me of what Irrfan [Khan] *sahab* used to tell me - '*Iss sheher mein log taareef kartein hain, kaam koi nai deta*. (In Mumbai people only praise you but do not offer you work). Thankfully, and touchwood, that is not the case now. I am in a space where I can choose, and not ask. So yes, patience does pay in this industry. Just stay consistent and try and work for yourself, not for competition, not for money, but to just do better. That is when people will reach out to you. Acting is a craft that you can learn in a film school, but making a career out of it is what the real world is teaching me.

How does fame affect you?

To be honest, I just wanted to be busy doing good work. That is happening. I don't think fame changes anything. I have lived without it and I know the possibility that I may not be famous in the future - even if it is the distant future - is real. So, I am not too bothered with fame.

Are you looking for romantic roles?

Why not? I would love to. I think, I have played a loving husband, a boy next door and a parent. I am being offered a wide variety of characters that excite me - all different from what I have done in the past. And yes, some of them are romantic ones too. I am happy about *Kaalkoot* (upcoming OTT show), in which I play a good cop. It's a positive character and I am loving it!

Most of your work has been negative roles. Aren't you scared of being stereotyped?

It started with my debut in *Chittagong* (2012). Most of my roles, even if they were not villainous, were dark characters, who cut against the grain. While I think I have thrived in the grey zone, I want breezy stuff now.

Who inspires you in terms of work?

I won't say I have role models, but the people I admire are iconic - from the likes of Irrfan Khan, Tabu and Naseeruddin Shah to Al Pacino and even Eminem. I love the kind of work these icons have done. Among contemporaries, there are so many good performers. It's great

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Rapid Fire

A self-confessed bibliophile, Varma recommends a few favourite books/ authors that are evergreen reads.

***A Suitable Boy* by Vikram Bhatt**
And this is not just because I have been in an adaptation. This is an impeccable book that has so many layers.

Bhagavad Gita
I think you can read the *Gita* from any page. I often do that - read the *Gita* for 5 to 10 minutes when I am unable to focus or think straight and I feel sorted.

Any Shakespeare drama
Face it, there is something so relatable - whether it is nostalgia, or a love for classics, or history! I can never have enough of them!

A poster of Varma's *Dahaad*

to see actors wanting to be actors, and not just decorative pieces in a film. That is really refreshing.

What does Vijay Varma do when not working?

I watch a lot of OTT content - sometimes I binge watch too. But I am mostly interested in documentaries, comedies and history. Now that I am getting good work, the prep also takes up a lot of time - whether it is working out, and learning to cook and eat healthy. I love reading. At any given point of time, I am probably reading two to three books together. I also am fond of gardening. So yeah, I try to live as well!

How about travelling ?

Travel is more than leisure for me. It is the best way to discover yourself and the world. It is a way to educate yourself about life! And before you ask me, I will tell you that the more history a destination has, the better travel spot it becomes for me. I do not like fancy-looking modern cities. Perhaps this is why I would pick Florence over Dubai. In fact, Italy has always been my favourite destination. It felt surreal to just be walking down the same streets that Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo once walked when I visited Florence. In India, Rajasthan and Shillong are two of my favourite destinations.

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Cover to cover

On the occasion of Book Lovers' Day, here are some unique facts about the tome

Leonardo da Vinci's notebook, known as the Codex Leicester, was sold for

USD 30.8 million

in an auction in 1994. The buyer was Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates

Teeny Ted from Turnip Town holds the title of the world's smallest printed book. It measures just

70 by 100 micrometers and requires a powerful microscope to be read

Book Lovers' Day is celebrated every year on

9 August

This day is dedicated to all bibliophiles and serves as an opportunity to celebrate the love of reading and literature!

The *Mahabharata* is believed to have been written by sage Vyasa. It contains over

200,000

verses and is considered one of the longest poems ever written

The unique smell of old books is caused by a combination of chemical reactions in paper and is known as "bibliosmia"!

The world's largest airport library is located in Schiphol, Holland. It houses a wide range of books and DVDs and was opened in

2010

India is home to some of the world's oldest-known texts- the Vedas. The Rigveda, for example, is one of the oldest religious texts in existence, dating back to around

1500 BC

The Bible holds the record for being the most translated book in the world

As per the Guinness book of World Records, a book titled *Michelangelo, La Dotta Mano* costs $155,000 per single edition and is believed to be the most expensive book in the world

The Diamond Sutra, a Buddhist text printed in China in

868 AD

is said to be the world's oldest surviving book with a known date of printing

***Bhutan: A Visual Odyssey Across the Last Himalayan Kingdom*, holds the record for being the largest book in the world. It measures**

5 feet by 7 feet

when opened and weighs around 133 pounds

Frames of Passion

Can you imagine travelling without clicking photographs! On World Photography Day, celebrated on August 19 every year, we immerse in a visual delight of some of the world's most unique landscapes, from Vietnam to India!

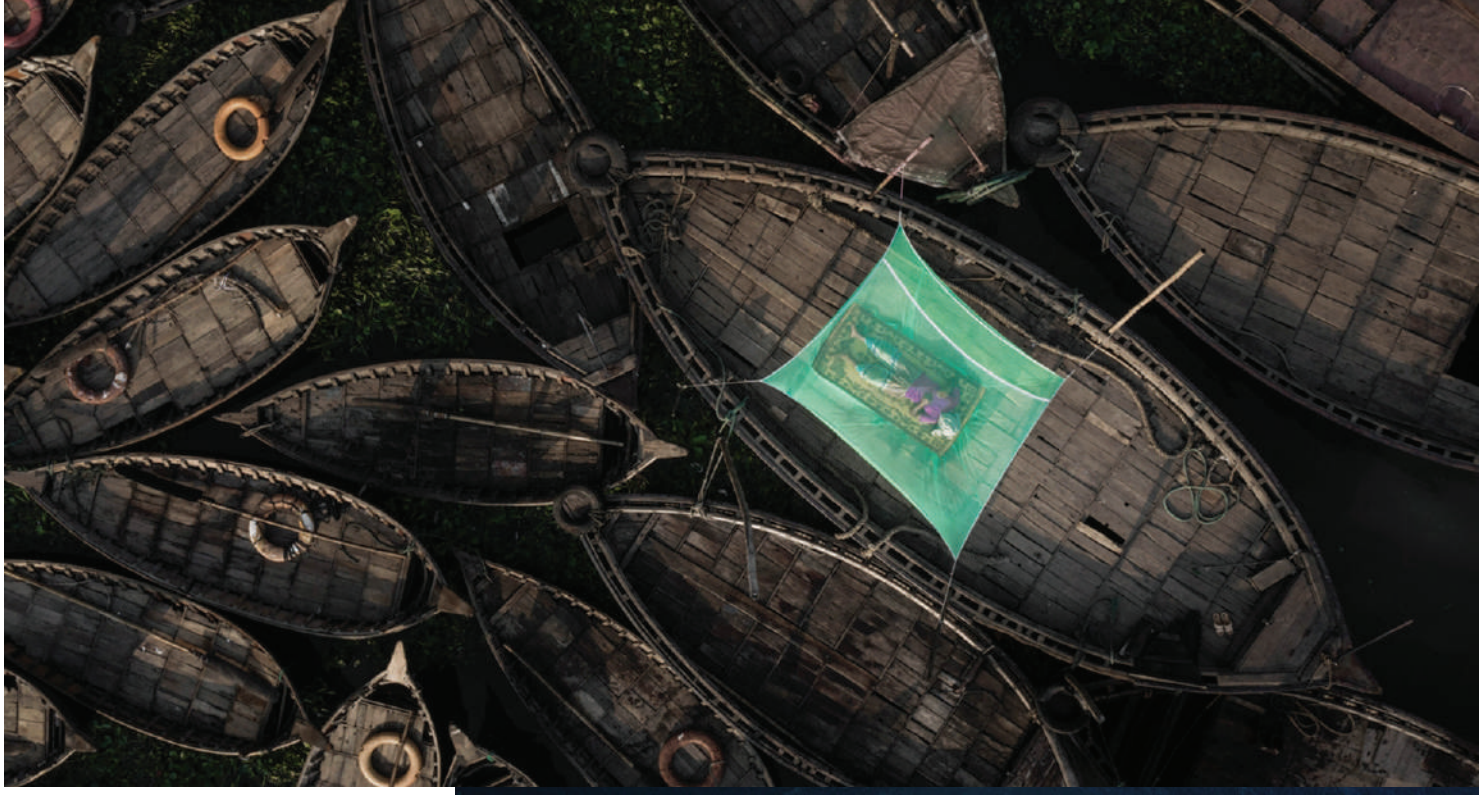
The Vietnamese village of Quang Phu Cau is famous for incense making. Incense holds immense importance in traditional Vietnamese rituals. This is an image of a woman making incense sticks in the village.

Photo: Anna Pham

Photography, as they say, is just a medium to capture and store human memories. Celebrating the history, craft and science of this magnificent art form, we bring you poignant impressions of beautiful journeys undertaken by some of the world's best photographers! We celebrate some of the most stunning landscapes from across our planet, collating moments, telling stories and preserving memories.

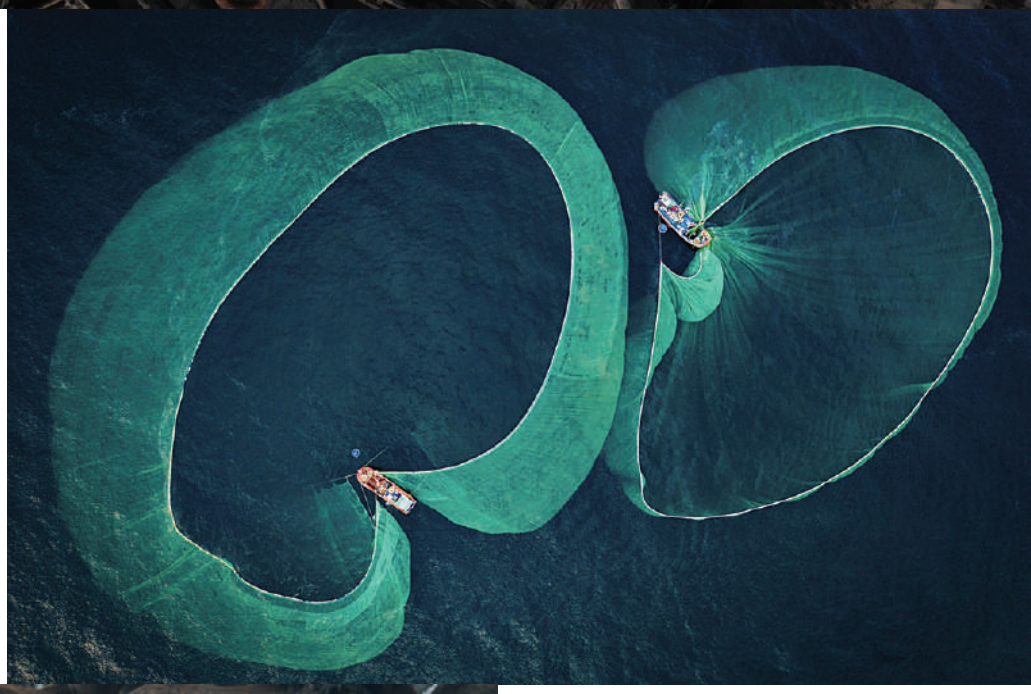
The gigantic golden statue of Lord Buddha at Langza village in Spiti Valley, Himachal Pradesh, is an iconic visual. At night, it gets a surreal glow silhoutted against the starry night sky!

Photo: Munish Raja



The Sadarghat river port of Dhaka is one of the busiest ports in Bangladesh. People from both sides of the Buriganga river cross it using small boats. The boatmen usually sleep at night on the boats.

Photo: Anindita Roy



An aerial perspective of anchovy fishing activities off the coast of Hon Yen. Salted anchovy is an important ingredient in making Vietnamese fish sauce.

Photo: Thien Nguyen Ngoc

This beautiful picture of a white horse within a herd of brown horses was captured in the Hurmetci village of Turkey. Set in the shadow of the volcanic Erciyes mountain between Kayseri, Cappadocia and Karada, the area is home to about 500 wild horses that roam southern Central Anatolia.

Photo: Mehmet Turgut Kirkgoz

This mesmerising view of Taj Mahal, over an incredible sea of clouds formations on river Yamuna seems like a dream. The eternal monument of love was built in the 17th century by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan.

Photo: Michele Falzone

This is a complex active volcano in Masaya, Nicaragua. This stunning photo was clicked when the volcano was emitting gas and smoke.

Photo: Roberto Zuniga

AUGUST 2023

YOUR FORECAST THIS MONTH

ARIES

Good fortune and bargains will come through business affairs, socialising and unexpected events. You will want to take a break from your work but it might require your attention. You might become anxious over a receipt or a cheque you thought was lost but it will recover soon. Unexpected gains are on the horizon!

TAURUS

You're going to make an important decision regarding your living situation. This indicates a happy, supportive, and nurturing atmosphere at your work place as well. Expect positive changes in your financial situation. You might receive money from those who owe you. It is time for a fresh start for you.

GEMINI

You might feel worried about your work or future but that will not stop you from walking towards your dreams. You will realise that dwelling on the past is worthless and will finally quit thinking about it and will embrace the future. You will make new friends and mend relationships. Go smartly and clearly.

CANCER

You will escape difficult situations and have unexpected monetary gains. You might get upset over a call. You may worry about your future but you will see things slowly working in your favour. Your health will improve. Remember to take a stand for yourself and say 'no' when necessary.

LEO

Power, expansion and success are on the cards for you! This will improve your attitude and determination. Finances or financial agreements will be discussed and mutually agreed upon resulting in higher profits in business. Someone unhappy might enter your life and offer to take care of you. Be careful !

VIRGO

If you have been bored with your work, excitement is on the cards. This zeal is coming from a compensation or new project which you will receive. Expect material gain in small sums. If your love life has been stagnant, someone is coming to get it rolling. If you are single, romance is coming for you.

LIBRA

Business might have been slow, but things are going to make forward movement now. Follow your intuition and do what feels right, if your gut feeling indicates that something is fishy, listen to it! You might feel that finances have been difficult but at the end you will have nothing to worry about. This month's focus for you is 'love'.

SCORPIO

Growth in business is coming! This will be in the form of an assignment, commission or employment opportunity. Financial concerns will be dealt effectively and you will be resourceful in acquiring money. You might receive a call which will be beneficial for you. Focus more on your needs.

SAGITTARIUS

You might be working hard but the fruits of your labour will come slow, which may frustrate you. You may feel physically exhausted and required to pay attention on your sleep cycle. Try not to think too much about work. Remember! Hard-work always pays off. Be patient and let this time pass.

CAPRICORN

Expect financial success regardless of obstacles. You might spend money on spirituality. Your heart will yearn for your true love and you will find that no one can take your 'special someone's' place. Try to sway away any illicit love offers. New job is on the cards.

AQUARIUS

Problems from the past are coming to an end and improvements are on the horizon. You might receive due payments such as cheques and money-orders. 'Self-love' is the key for finding your true love and you need to practise it, feel happy and fulfilled first. You will take a break from eating or drinking too much.

PISCES

A change in your career will be beneficial for you. You might be worried that your resources are drying up but a news will new light on the issue. Someone from your past might return and you might feel indecisive about your relationship with them. Try to calm your mind and make informed decisions.

Tarot card reader and holistic healer Poonam Sethi believes in the power of giving. With a career spanning more than three decades, Sethi today is an internationally-acclaimed tarot card reader, Reiki healer, colour therapist, Feng Shui practitioner, crystal healer, a specialist in removal and balancing the negative evil eye energies and a *rudraksha* consultant. She is also the author of *The Power of Feng Shui*, which offers 90 practical and efficient tips to improve one's life.
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THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION, Government of India, has upgraded its Air Sewa portal, which is accessible through both interactive web portal and mobile app. The new version includes the following features:

a) Secure sign-up and log-in with social media

b) Chatbot for travellers' support

c) Improved grievance management, including social media grievance

d) Real-time flight status and detailed flight schedule

Air Sewa is available at www.airsewa.gov.in

You may also visit www.dgca.nic.in or write to sugam@dgca.nic.in

NEWS

Ajay Singh, promoter of SpiceJet, invests 500 Crores in the company

Fresh equity infusion will help company access additional credit facilities of INR 206 crore under ECLGS

SpiceJet Promoter Ajay Singh has decided to infuse INR 500 crore into SpiceJet by way of subscribing fresh equity shares and/or convertible instruments.

The infusion of fresh capital will substantially strengthen the Company's financial position and is a powerful vote of confidence in its future and long-term viability. It marks a pivotal moment in SpiceJet's journey towards sustained growth and long-term success.

The Board of Directors of the Company considered options for raising fresh capital for the Company where Ajay Singh, Promoter of the Company, in order to strengthen the financial position of the Company, offered to infuse INR 500 crore.

The Board deliberated on the matter and agreed to issue equity shares and/or convertible securities/equity share warrants on preferential basis to the Promoter and/or the Promoter Group of the Company, on preferential basis, in one or more tranches at an issue price to be determined in accordance with the SEBI ICDR Regulations for an amount of INR 500 crore subject to the approval(s) of the shareholders of the Company, the Securities and Exchange Board of India and/or any other competent authorities and such other approvals, consent, etc. as may be required in this regard.

With this fund infusion by the Promoter, SpiceJet would be entitled to additional credit facilities of INR 206 Crore under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme.

Ajay Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, SpiceJet said, "I am pleased to announce that I will infuse INR 500 crore into the Company. SpiceJet has a bright future and I am committed to helping it achieve its full potential. This investment will allow the airline to accelerate its growth plans and capture new opportunities in the market, grow its revenue and profits. We are committed to building a sustainable and profitable business, and this investment is a reflection of that commitment."

"I am confident that SpiceJet, a powerful brand which has served passengers for over 18 years, will succeed in the long term and I am excited to be a part of this journey."

The airline is already utilising $50 million ECLGS funds that it has already received and its own cash to revive its grounded aircraft.

SpiceJet appoints EaseMyTrip as a General Sales Agent

SpiceJet, India's favourite airline, is pleased to announce the appointment of EaseMyTrip (EMT) as a General Sales Agent (GSA) for select market section in India. This strategic partnership aims to enhance the promotion and sale of SpiceJet's products and services in select markets.

This collaboration showcases the commitment of both companies to deliver exceptional travel experiences and convenience to customers.

The appointment of EaseMyTrip as a General Sales Agent will commence from 1st August, 2023. With their extensive network and expertise in the travel industry, EaseMyTrip will play an important role in boosting sales. As the GSA, EaseMyTrip will actively promote SpiceJet's services, leverage its distribution channels, and employ all necessary measures to enhance the distribution and network of SpiceJet.

SpiceJet had recently announced plans to revive its grounded fleet with the $50 million funds received by the airline from the government's Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) and internal cash accruals in time for the peak winter travel season.

As part of the revitalization program, the airline has also partnered with FTAI Aviation Ltd., a leading aftermarket provider of engine services. By leveraging FTAI Aviation's engine expertise, SpiceJet will have access to a pipeline of available engines which eliminates the need for frequent shop visits.

SpiceJet will also see the return and induction of three Q400s following a settlement agreement with Nordic Aviation Capital and will induct ten B737s beginning winter schedule.

"With this collaboration and the potential for future acquisitions, we are presented with a fantastic opportunity for growth. We are eagerly anticipating the exciting possibilities that lie ahead as we further explore our partnership with SpiceJet," said Nishant Pitti, CEO and Co-Founder, EaseMyTrip

SpiceJet and EaseMyTrip share a common goal of enhancing the travel experience for passengers by offering affordable fares and extensive route networks. This partnership will enable both companies to unlock new opportunities and reinforce their positions in the Indian aviation market.

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My Town

In our series, in which we travel to various Indian cities with a SpiceJet family member, this month, Raveena Kaur Ghatode, Senior Cabin Crew (Ahmedabad), takes us around her hometown.

MS. RAVEENA KAUR GHATODE
SENIOR CABIN CREW, AMD BASE

Are you originally from Ahmedabad?
Yes, I was born and bought up in Ahmedabad.

How is Ahmedabad as a city?
If you seek thrill, Ahmedabad is the right city for you. People who love spending time outdoors, having a safe working environment with an economical lifestyle, should consider Ahmedabad an option. The city is clean, green and a well-developed one. I love Ahmedabad for its drool-worthy and low cost street food.

What is the best thing about the city?
The best thing about this city is its rich history and culture which is reflected in its magnificent monuments, museums, ashrams and food. Ahmedabad has a thriving cultural scenario and is the centre of cultural activities in Gujarat.

How is night life in Ahmedabad?
Ahmedabad has quite a happening night life. There are many places for youngsters to hang-out.

How is the Ahmedabad's lifestyle different from that of other urban cities?
People of Ahmedabad believe in the concept of "Aavo Padharo" which translates to "Welcome" in Gujarati. We believe in being hospitable and humble to our guests. As the city is built on the banks of Sabarmati river, the river has been the lifeline of the city for years. I have spent the most memorable evenings of my life watching beautiful sunsets.

Are you a foodie? What are your favourite eateries in Ahmedabad?

Yes! I am a big-time foodie. It is not possible for me to pick a favourite eatery. To name a few, I think Manek Chowk offers scrumptious street food. If you eat meat, I would recommend to try Baghdad Fry Centre. If you wish to try authentic Gujarati food, 'Gordhan Thal' is my go-to place.

How did you discover it?

I love to try-out new cafes. Hunting cafés and eating at new places with college friends is the reason behind these incredible discoveries. I have lot of memories attached to this place. Me and my squad used to hang out at these places very often after college.

What are the best places to hang out in Ahmedabad?

Ahmedabad or 'Amdavad', as we Gujaratis like to call it, is a city full of fun, frolic, and colors. It has undergone changes continously, but the spirit of celebrating life and preserving its heritage through architectural wonders remain intact in its residents. Jama Masjid, Sarkhej Roza, and Hutheesing Jain Temple are some of the places one should definitely visit in Ahmedabad. Vastrapur Lake is also an alluring location after Sabarmati Riverfront to spend evenings peacefully.

What attractions in Ahmedabad would you like to recommend to a tourist?

Ahmedabad has a unique blend of age-old historical monuments and contemporary avant-garde design buildings. Because of the abundance of textile industries, Ahmedabad is famously called the "Manchester of East". The first place I would recommend anyone to visit will be Sabarmati Ashram, which is also called the second home of Mahatma Gandhi. Kankaria Lake, Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary, Adalaj Stepwell, and Bhadra Fort are some other places of visit that I would suggest.

Apart from Ahmedabad what are the other places you would recommend outside but near to the city?

Situated on the west coast of Sabarmati River, Gandhinagar is the epitome of rich cultural heritage and is located around 31 km north of Ahmedabad. Zanzari Waterfall is a place that will leave you gasping in awe of its beauty. If you are looking for some peace and isolation, Suvali beach is the right place for you. It is nestled at a distance 20km from Surat. The ethereal beauty of the place will surprise you with some stunning vistas and spectacular sunsets.

What are the people here like?

People in Ahmedabad believe in living a healthy and simple lifestyle. They are warm, pure-hearted and quite fond of food. During festivals, people are excited as well as active to gather to celebrate each occasion with excitement and happiness.

What are the other places where you have stayed in India? How is Ahmedabad compared to them?

I have traveled all around India and like most of the cities, life is not as fast-paced here. Ahmedabad has everything- from abundance of street food to shopping in local markets. Beautiful riverfront, farmhouses, water parks and amusement parks, theatres, and art galleries, this place is filled with authenticity, humbleness and eccentric places of visit.

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR FAVORITE DISH AT THE PLACE.

Dhokla, without second thoughts. These fluffy delights are not only delicious but are healthy as well. This steamed savory cake tempered in spices is all you need with a cup of hot tea, as an evening snack.

A Spicey Green Holiday

SpiceJet's Captain Rajendra Makker takes us on a long road trip from Bengaluru to Munnar in his new EV, returning refreshed and having laid to rest a few doubts!

Our holiday last month at Munnar, was truly relaxing and experiential and hence we think back on it as our spicey green vacation, as when Nina and self, went on our maiden long trip on our Tata Nexon Dark Edition EV - Electric Vehicle. It was about six weeks back that I was told by SpiceJet's Cockpit Crew Planner, "Sir, your leave approved by the Chief Pilot". I decided that like SpiceJet travels to new Tier II and Tier III destinations to make its route network interesting, I too would plan this novel trip in my new electric vehicle. The journey was spread over five days covering a distance of 1,200 km.

Our first overnight stay was planned at Sulur Air Base, which is 375 km from Bengaluru and this was done effortlessly with the first recharge of both the EV and ourselves, planned at the outskirts of Salem (202 km from Bengaluru).

The EV is as quiet as SpiceJet's Next Generation Q-400 with noise cancellation System. The remaining 173 km was like "a breeze" on the smooth national highway. An early night halt allowed for slow recharge for the EV and the two of us. Incidentally, India's first commercial aircraft "Green Fuel" flight was conducted with SpiceJet's Q-400 aircraft.

The next day, it was a 185-km drive to our destination through salubrious green forests, hills and tea gardens winding through Anna Anamalai Tiger Reserve as well as Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary.

The next three days were spent in leisure and rejuvenation for both of us as well as the car. Our holiday was peppered with early morning walks in the hills taking in the sights and sounds of nature, followed by a lazy morning breakfast, accompanied with a hot steaming cup of *chai* or coffee; it was exactly what the doctor had ordered! Evenings were about enjoying the verdant views and the beautiful sunsets, memories of which are still fresh in our minds. The languid days ensured we were thoroughly rested and fully charged up.

The return journey with an occasional drizzle to a heavy downpour at places, tested the EV's all-weather and my hill driving capabilities. The experience was quite akin to Q-400 flights during the monsoon season. The halt at Ripple Tea Garden stall with refreshing black tea in the light rain was definitely romantic! We followed the same plan of some rest and recuperation on the return leg, via Sulur Air Base. With an early morning departure from Sulur to Bengaluru, with recharge scheduled at Relux Charging Station at Thoppur, which is at a distance of 215 km from Sulur. On this route, EV charging stations are generally co-located with decent eateries, which is great for foodies like us! A rested and well-fed pilot or driver is essential for any safe and error-free journey!

"The electric car is as quiet as SpiceJet's Next Generation Q-400 aircraft with noise cancellation system."

Captain Rajendra Singh Makker is a Bengaluru-based senior Captain on Q-400 with over 13,000 hrs. He has been with SpiceJet for 13 years and is a current Instructor & Examiner on type. He loves travelling, is a keen sportsman and long distance runner.

My observations and experiences from this road trip in my EV are that, there is no ideal range of an EV as it is dependent on the few parameters that are variable for each drive, like journey terrain, vehicle loading and use of the air conditioner; all can be factored effectively to get the desired performance. Hence, the same is taught to all pilots specific to their aircraft and its refreshed every year.

Looking back, this was indeed a memorable trip, which required a fair bit of planning and execution as well as allowing room for some impromptu excursions and we are so extremely satisfied that it paid off. The vacation was a smooth affair and all apprehensions about the use of EV for long drives were put to rest!

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Meet the achievers of the month from the SpiceJet family, who have stood out for their outstanding work

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RASHMI NAHAR
GURGAON

Internal appreciation: Rashmi has been quite pro-active in handling the subsidiary companies and also day to day customer issues. She is additionally resolving finance & CFO desk matters pertaining to travel & logistics. Her response time is quite appreciating and takes full ownership in her role.

Experience with SpiceJet: It has been a wonderful jouney of 14.5 years with SpiceJet which was full of learnings. I am highly greatful to the management for showing confidence in me and giving ample opportunities to showcase my abilities and skills. I owe my gratitude towards wonderful collegues who have guided and motivated me in this magnificent journey. I thank SpiceJet for all the support throughout this journey.

Cargo

PANKAJ NAHAL
DELHI

Internal appreciation: I would like to appreciate the sincere efforts put in by Mr. Pankaj Nahal, since his induction into cargo division in Oct 2007. The positive energy & experience Mr. Pankaj brings in makes everyone's day. He has vast experience in day to day cargo operations, be it at office, warehouse, or ramp activities. He has gone an extra mile to help in resolving matters with internal & external customers. Would once again take this opportunity to thank him for being a part of our cargo team.

Experience with SpiceJet: I have been working for sixteen years with SpiceJet & still going strong and feeling fresh. It's a wonderful experience working with this esteemed organization & still it's a new learning from my seniors and colleagues. I am grateful to have such an outstanding and supportive team. Handling the office, warehouse & ramp functions have been amazing from the day one. Once again I would like to thank one & all for supporting me. to achieve this Award.

Ground service

VINEET VISHAL
DELHI

Internal appreciation: Delhi Airport wants to acknowledge the amazing job that Mr. Vineet is doing. His dedication, professionalism and hard work sets an example for what we strive for at SpiceJet. MHB is definitely not an easy job to undergo as no passenger will be happy on knowing their baggage is mishandeled. However his knowledge, experience and skill with which he performs his duties make all the difference. We appreciate his willingness to assist and help his colleagues at Delhi as well as across the network which amplifies his generosity. We want to retraite his importance being a part of our team and Spicejet on a whole.

Experience with SpiceJet: The journey with SpiceJet has been a spectacular one. I have grown to lead and learn at the same time. I am extremely grateful of the opportunities that I have been given here. I would lilke to thank my wonderful colleagues and bosses for trusting me and helping me become a better version of myself. Thank you all for trusting me and helping me grow.

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The Mid-Air Feast

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BREAKFAST

RASEELE CHOLE
with mix vegetable parantha & vegetable tikki

MASALA OMELETTE
with grilled chicken sausages & hash brown

LUNCH

PANEER METHI MALAI
with jeera rice & dal makhani

CHICKEN TIKKA EGG BIRYANI
with mirch ka salan

DINNER

TAWA PANEER KHURCHAN
with steamed rice & tadka masoor dal

MURG LABABDAR
with palak pulao & dal panchrattni

SNACKS

PANEER TIKKA SHASHLIK
with sliced stuffed tandoori aloo & vegetable croquette

SLICED CHICKEN SEEKH KEBAB
with sliced stuffed tandoori aloo & vegetable croquette

SANDWICHES

SPINACH, CORN AND CHEESE SANDWICH
in marble bread

ROAST CHICKEN, SUNDRIED TOMATO AND BASIL SANDWICH
in marble bread

CHEF'S CHOICES

VEGETABLES IN RED THAI CURRY
with steamed rice

GRILLED CHICKEN BREAST
with mushroom sauce, yellow rice, sautéed carrots & beans baton

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*All images shot at site

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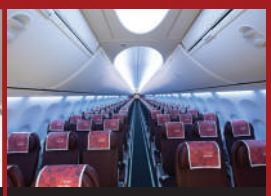
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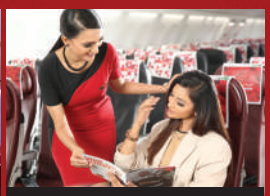
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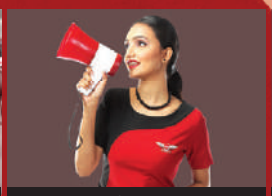
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FLIGHTS*	DEP.	ARR.	FREQUENCY
Madurai – Colombo[1]	13:15	14:25	Daily (Except Wed)
Colombo – Madurai[1]	15:25	16:35	Daily (Except Wed)
Madurai – Chennai	12:05	13:25	Daily
Chennai – Madurai	10:20	11:40	Daily
Madurai – Chennai	20:55	22:10	Daily
Chennai – Madurai	19:20	20:35	Daily
Madurai – Hyderabad[2]	12:45/17:25^	14:35/19:25^	Daily
Hyderabad – Madurai[2]	10:35	12:15	Daily

[1]Starting from 20th August, 2023. [2]Starting from 10th August, 2023.
^New timings applicable from 20th August, 2023.

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FLIGHTS*	DEP.	ARR.	FREQUENCY
Hyderabad – Colombo[1]	10:35	14:25	Daily (Except Wed)
Colombo – Hyderabad[1]	15:25	19:25	Daily (Except Wed)
Chennai – Colombo[1]	10:20	14:25	Daily (Except Wed)
Colombo – Chennai[1]	15:25	22:10	Daily (Except Wed)

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*T&C apply.